

Manners, Gerald. *The Geography of Energy*. London, Hutchinson University Library, 1964. 205 pages.

J. D. Chapman

Volume 11, numéro 24, 1967

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/020759ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/020759ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Département de géographie de l'Université Laval

ISSN

0007-9766 (imprimé)

1708-8968 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce compte rendu

Chapman, J. D. (1967). Compte rendu de [Manners, Gerald. *The Geography of Energy*. London, Hutchinson University Library, 1964. 205 pages.] *Cahiers de géographie du Québec*, 11(24), 591–592. <https://doi.org/10.7202/020759ar>

area, these basic features of Amerindian life were common to almost all in the pre-Hispanic period. Densities of Indian population appear to have been high, and Sauer finds acceptable the Lascasian estimates of ca. three million Indians in Hispaniola, a broadly-similar figure for Jamaica, and ca. two million in Castilla del Oro. Peripheral islands, e.g. the coral limestone islands of the Bahamas and Barbados, also had a numerous population. Yet by 1519, following Spanish settlement, this population had been decimated or completely removed in many parts of Middle America.

A search for the geographical causes of such a massive population change constitutes one of the major themes of this book. One prime factor was certainly the unceasing quest for gold, instigated by Columbus, and later encouraged by a succession of misguided directives from the Spanish court, or by ruthless and unsavoury leaders such as Pedrarias Davila of Castilla del Oro. When taken away from their conucos to work in goldplacers or mines, Indians died in large numbers, and many more were butchered by the new settlers in order to obtain political control of additional areas and extend the search for gold. Once local Indian labour had been used up, peripheral islands had their population removed as slaves. By 1519, when pressure exerted by the Dominicans, Las Casas and others had resulted in a more enlightened official Indian policy, very few Indians were left in Spanish-controlled areas, and those that remained were reduced in numbers still further by European diseases.

Such a massive destruction of Indians, their culture and their agriculture, naturally gave rise to major changes in environment. Immediately, agricultural food resources declined, since most Spanish settlers knew nothing of crop production and had depended on the Indians for their food; this was especially true of the islands, where the rapid impoverishment and removal of certain native faunal elements (parrots, iguanas, Indian dogs, etc.) bears witness to the subsequent desperate search for food. Some islands, such as Barbados, reverted to forest so completely that later settlers could find no trace of former inhabitants. Even on the mainland, previously well-tended areas on the Caribbean coast of Panama changed quickly from cultivation and savanna to brush and impassable forest once the population had declined; Sauer notes that this forest was later to become one of the most notoriously disease-ridden in the New World, a strange contrast to the situation in the pre-Hispanic period.

Of course, this book is concerned with many additional items of interest to the historical and cultural geographer, especially those dealing with the nature of Indian cultures and their food resources, the chronology of exploration, and the economic and political basis of life in the new colonies. In the first few chapters, Sauer concentrates primarily on developments in the Caribbean, especially on Hispaniola, and turns later to the penetration of Tierra Firme to the Pacific. Throughout, maps are well chosen to clarify the argument.

It is a pleasure to review a book based on the possibly old-fashioned geographical virtues of detailed field observation and documentary analysis. Together with Sauer's intimate knowledge of Middle American cultural values, this combination has given rise to a significant reassessment of one phase of the evolution of landscape and culture in this area. As such, *The Early Spanish Main* forms an important addition to existing works on the origins of geographical change in the Americas, and will be an easily-readable major reference source.

David WATTS,
University of Hull, England.

GÉOGRAPHIE ÉCONOMIQUE

MANNERS, Gerald. *The Geography of Energy*. London, Hutchinson University Library, 1964. 205 pages.

Rather than write about energy in terms of particular sources (e.g. coal or oil) or regional characteristics, Professor Manners' approach in this effective little book is to identify and evaluate the groups of variables which may be used to explain the geography of energy. Consequently the reader will not find this volume useful as a source of energy data for it is not intended to be a

descriptive work. However, he will find that it provides considerable insight into the forces underlying the form and function of energy systems with particular reference to the United Kingdom, Europe and the U.S.A. The «geography of energy» is taken to mean the spatial characteristics of the production, transport and consumption of inanimate energy.

The book is arranged around a consideration of transport, market and political factors as the most powerful variables influencing the energy scene. Among these, transport cost is seen to play the crucial role and chapters 3-5 examine in some detail, the underpinnings of the cost structure of energy transportation by continuous (pipeline, transmission line) and discontinuous (road, rail and water) media. Case studies of the manufactured gas and thermal electricity industries are used to illustrate the influence of transport costs at the national scale. Market influences in terms of size, location and nature, are examined in chapters 6 and 7 and the last two chapters are devoted to a consideration of political factors which are identified as regulation, stimulation and protection, participation and energy policy. The volume concludes with a study of the location of oil refining as a means of demonstrating, in general terms, the operation of transport, market and political factors.

In evaluating this book some readers may be disappointed not to find a more explicit treatment of the role of hydro and of nuclear fuels in the generation of electricity and some economic geographers will find the passing references to Weber and Hoover an insufficient link with location theory. Nevertheless, the «Geography of Energy» is securely based upon a range of technical and social science literature, follows a theme which effectively compliments existing works and is written in a simple, clear style.

J. D. CHAPMAN,
University of British Columbia.

KERFOOT, Denis, E. **Port of British Columbia : Development and Trading patterns.**

Department of Geography, University of British Columbia, B.C. Geographical Series No. 2, 1966. 120 pages.

Pour nous « gens de l'Est », l'évolution du transport maritime sur la côte ouest canadienne demeure assez peu connue étant donné l'énorme distance qui nous en sépare. Aussi, des publications comme celles de M. Kerfoot sont-elles les bienvenues.

Étude générale, *Port of British Columbia : Development and Trading Patterns* traite collectivement des ports de la Colombie-Britannique (Port of British Columbia) comme un seul point d'expédition, les références individuelles étant faites selon l'importance de leur contribution aux exportations totales.

L'énoncé de concepts à la mode dans la littérature maritime et une définition du but poursuivi forment les éléments principaux du premier chapitre. La traditionnelle étude portuaire, mentionne l'auteur, consiste en une description du port, de sa situation et de ses facilités, suivie ou précédée d'un historique plus ou moins important auxquels s'ajoutent une analyse du trafic et une appréciation de ses fonctions. Cette approche est purement descriptive, dit-il ! Heureusement, les récentes études portuaires, particulièrement celles poursuivies à l'université de Chicago, insistent davantage sur les relations (*trading patterns*) entre les ports plutôt que sur les ports eux-mêmes tout en illustrant le rôle des compagnies maritimes dans la promotion du commerce avec l'étranger. Cette manière d'aborder le problème présente certainement une image plus dynamique et plus intégrée de la vie portuaire. L'ouvrage de M. Kerfoot s'identifie complètement avec cette seconde façon de procéder : « In keeping with the aim of this study, to focus on the distributional patterns of commodity trade » (page 12). Quelles sont les principales denrées manutentionnées et en quelles quantités ? Quels sont les principaux courants (*patterns*) commerciaux et quelle a été leur évolution dans le temps ? Voilà les principales questions auxquelles tente de répondre l'auteur. Ainsi le commerce et non les ports devient le but de la recherche.

L'auteur y aborde aussi les concepts d'*hinterland* et de *foreland*. Pour M. Kerfoot, l'*hinterland* est un « theoretical device for analysing the spacial connections between a port and the land area that it serves ». Le concept, ajoute-t-il, peut-être utilisé avec une précision relative selon les possibilités statistiques, chaque port étendant son influence sur un espace variable créant